

Testimony of Catherine E. Greaves
Registered Voter in Cromwell, CT
On Behalf of Continued Support of
Children's Trust Fund Program

I am here today as the Clinical Supervisor of the Family School Connection Program and formerly the Clinical Supervisor of the Nurturing Families Network. As you can see I've stayed within the Children's Trust Fund family because I believe in what Children's Trust Fund stands for. The proposal to eliminate funding to all Children's Trust Fund programs would be a huge detriment to the communities in CT. These programs all have the same mission, to reduce and eliminate Child Abuse and Neglect statewide by providing families in need with supportive home visitation services. But more than that, I want to put a face to these programs and tell you a story about a mom who I asked to present to our families at a Family School Connection event. She presented on money and coupon saving tips in tough economic times and I asked her to present because she had developed a talent for it. When she saw me for the first time in several years she began to cry not because she didn't want to see me but because she became overwhelmed with emotion. She told me that if it wasn't for Nurturing Families and Children's Trust Fund she would not have received the help she needed and she questions "where would I be now". More specifically with the help of her home visitor and the tools used in NFN they were able to identify developmental deficits her son was showing and taking this information to the pediatrician her son received the early intervention he needed. BT3 became involved shortly after and her son was diagnosed with autism and is currently in preschool receiving early intervention services. Her story shows us how important and valued the services through Children's Trust Fund are and how early intervention especially in situations with developmental delays is a cost saver to the state.

Both NFN Family School Connection reaches parents and children in critical times of growth and development. According to the Family School Connection process and evaluation report , demographic data shows that the majority of families who receives services from FSC earn less than \$15,000 per year and receive government assistance through husky , food stamps, and SSI. Some of the most vulnerable children we work with are not getting their basic needs met therefore parents are also unable to meet their educational needs and often **education** becomes the **last priority for families**. Most recently, we have 3 families who are currently homeless and struggling to provide their children with items that so many of us take for granted. One of our home visitors worked diligently with a family to help her find permanent housing. After months of hard work and endless hope this family was able to re pay housing debt and moved into permanent housing where her she and children can now call home. Her children's grades and attendance have improved and teachers have credited the collaboration of the Family School Connection and this family for a tremendous job. We talk so often about our children being the future of this state, but what will our future look like without early intervention and prevention programs to help children achieve success. I worry about the condition of our state and future without Children's Trust Fund programs. As a tax payer and voter I encourage you to think about what will happen to our most **vulnerable people**, the ones without voices, the ones that count on us, the **children of our state**.